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# TORNADO WATCH AND WARNING ..... DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE ?

## WATCH:

A Tornado Watch is issued to alert people to the possibility of tornado development in your area.

## WARNING:

A Tornado Warning is issued when a tornado has actually been sighted or is indicated by radar.



## TORNADO MYTHS

**Myth:** Areas near rivers, lakes and mountains are safe from tornadoes.

**Fact:** No place is safe from tornadoes.

**Myth:** The low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.

**Fact:** Violent winds and debris slamming into buildings cause the most structural damage.

**Myth:** Windows should be opened before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.

**Fact:** Opening windows allows damaging winds to enter the structure. Leave the windows alone; instead, immediately go to a safe place.

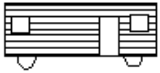
**Myth:** Tornadoes are always visible from a great distance.

**Fact:** Tornadoes can be hidden in heavy rainfall or nearby low hanging clouds.

# WHERE SHOULD I TAKE SHELTER



**In a home:** The basement offers the greatest safety. Seek shelter under sturdy furniture if possible. In homes without basements, take cover in the center part of the house, on the lowest floor, in a small room such as a closet or bathroom, or under sturdy furniture. Keep away from windows.



**In a mobile home:** The home should be evacuated, and shelter should be taken in a prearranged substantial shelter. If there is no shelter nearby, leave the trailer and lie flat in a ditch or ravine. Protect your head by placing your arms over it. Do not take shelter under your home.



**Driving a vehicle:** Get out of the vehicle and take shelter in a nearby ditch or ravine; do not get under your vehicle. Lie flat and put your arms over your head.



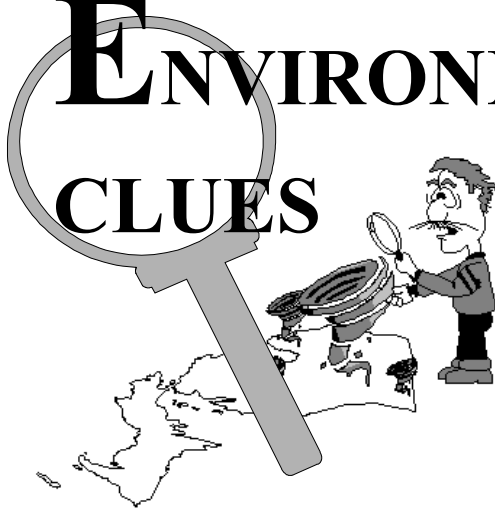
**At Work or at School:** Follow advanced plans to move to interior hallways or small rooms on the lowest floor. Avoid areas with glass and wide, freespan roofs. (Schools, factories, and office buildings should designate someone to look out for severe weather and initiate an alarm.)



**In open country:** Lie in a gully, ditch, or low spot in the ground and hold onto something on the ground if possible. Do not seek shelter in damaged buildings, they may collapse completely.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

### CLUES



#### Look out for:

- Dark, often greenish skies
- Wall cloud
- Large hail
- Loud roar; similar to a freight train



**Tornadoes can strike anytime, anywhere, and more than once.**

# TORNADO PREPARATION

Each tornado season review with your family the area in the home that is designated as the shelter, and practice having everyone in the family go there in response to a tornado threat.

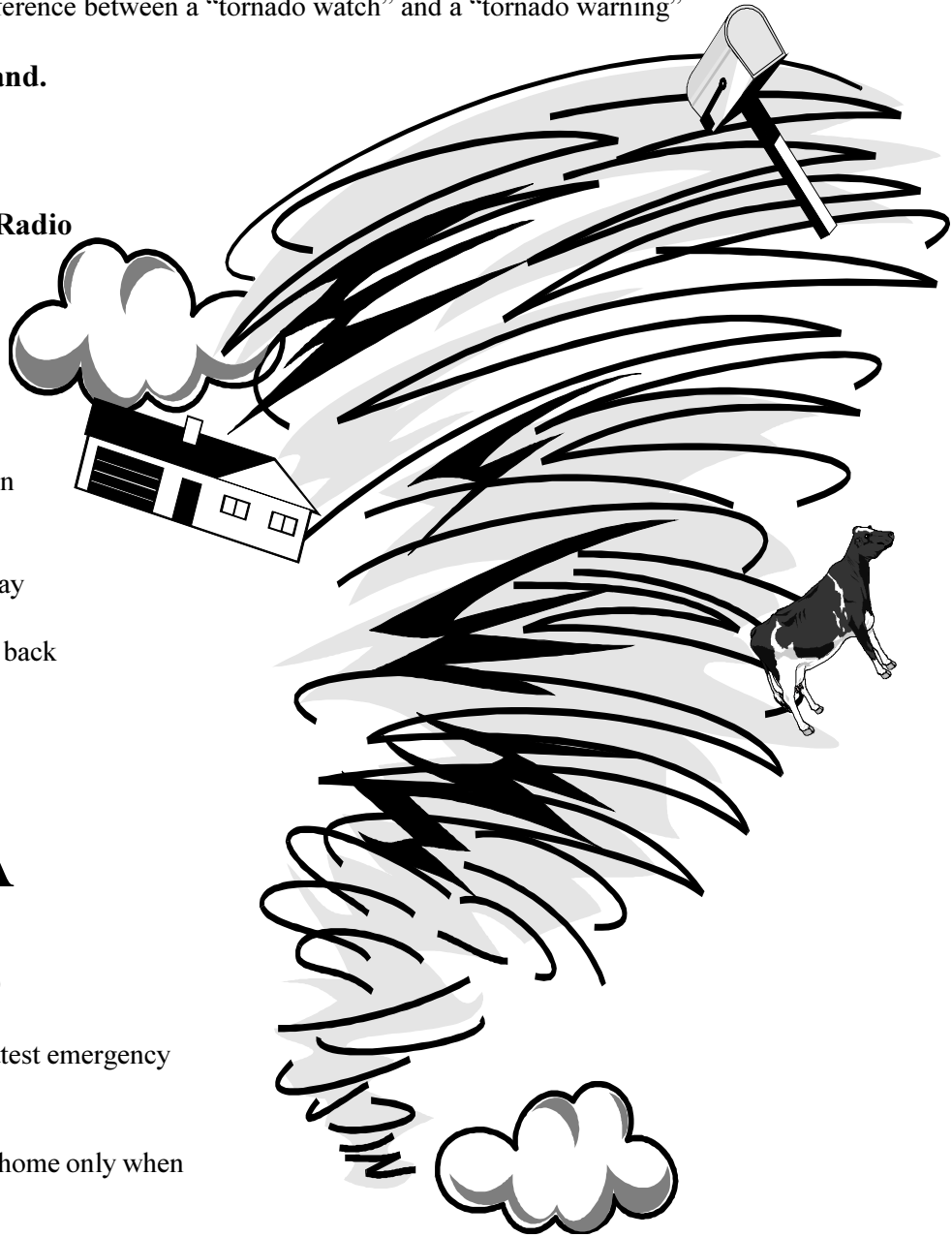
Discuss with family members the difference between a “tornado watch” and a “tornado warning”

**Have a disaster supplies kit on hand.**

**This kit should include:**

**Flashlight  
Extra Batteries  
Battery Operated Radio  
First Aid Kit  
Can Opener  
Canned Food  
Bottled Water  
Extra Clothes**

Develop an emergency communication plan in case family members are separated from one another during a tornado (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school), have a plan for getting back together.









## AFTER A TORNADO

- Turn on radio or television to get the latest emergency information.
- Stay out of damaged buildings. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches or gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. Leave the building if you smell gas or chemical fumes.
- Take pictures of the damage--both to the house and its contents--for insurance purposes.

# HOW TORNADOES ARE CLASSIFIED

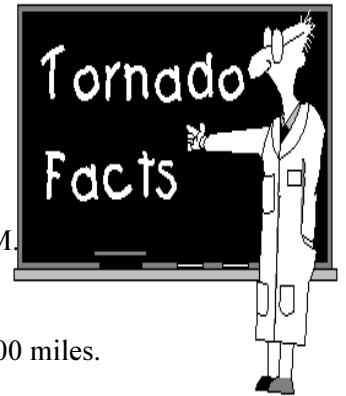
## Fujita- Pearson Tornado Scale

### Scale

-  **F-0:** 72mph winds, light damage (chimney damage, tree branches broken).
-  **F-1:** 73-112mph winds, moderate damage (mobile homes pushed off foundation or overturned).
-  **F-2:** 113-157mph winds, considerable damage (mobile homes demolished, trees uprooted).
-  **F-3:** 158-205mph winds, severe damage (roofs and walls torn down, trains overturned, cars thrown).
-  **F-4:** 207-260mph winds, devastating wind, (well-constructed walls leveled).
-  **F-5:** 261-318mph winds, incredible wind, (homes lifted off foundation and carried considerable distances, autos thrown as far as 100 meters).

## TORNADO FACTS OF MICHIGAN

- An average of 16 tornadoes occur in Michigan each year.
- Between 1950 and 1998 867 tornadoes have occurred in Michigan causing 239 deaths.
- In Michigan most tornadoes occur in April, May, June and July between 3 PM-7 PM.
- The average tornado is grounded less than 10 minutes and travels about 5 miles, extreme cases have been known to be grounded for an hour and travel more than 100 miles.
- The typical tornado as it touches the ground averages 200 to 400 yards, averaging winds of 71-125 mph in Michigan.



## WEB PAGES

- The Weather Channel at: <http://www.weather.com>
- Tornado Project at: <http://www.tornadoproject.com>
- The National Weather Service at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>
- The Federal Emergency Management agency at: <http://www.fema.gov/>
- Tornado Safety at: <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/tornados.html>
- The Michigan State Police, Emergency Management Division at: [www.mspemd.org](http://www.mspemd.org)
- American Red Cross : Disaster supplies kit at: <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/supplies.html>

